

ROAD WORK.

STATUS OF A NUMBER OF PETITIONS
NOW BEFORE BOARD OF ASSESSORS.

Final Reports on Osborne and Charles Street Work Accepted by Council.—Walnut Street, Jerome Place and Delaware Avenue matters progressing—Spruce Street matter at a standstill.

In accordance with the law, the Town Clerk issued notice on September 18 that objections to the reports and maps filed by the Board of Assessors in the matter of laying out, opening, extending and widening Osborne Street and Charles Street would be received by the Town Council on Monday evening, October 6. When the Council met Monday night, Town Clerk Johnson reported that only one objection had been received in the matter of Osborne Street, and that was from Samuel Baestinger, who alleged that he derived no benefit from the opening of the street, and objected to the assessment of benefits assessed against his property. Mr. Baestinger was the only objector, and as he did not represent a sufficient amount of property to prevent the confirmation by the Council of the report of the Assessors, the report was confirmed, after some discussion between Councilman Moore and Assessor Gilbert as to the ratio of valuations followed by the Assessors in levying assessments.

No objections were presented against receiving and approving the report of the Board of Assessors in the Charles Street matter, and the report was approved.

In the matter of opening Jerome Place and Walnut Street extension, Mr. Gilbert said that a hearing had been given by the Board on Friday evening, October 3, and adjourned to October 9.

Chairman Peterson asked Mr. Gilbert if anything had been done in the Delaware Avenue opening matter.

Mr. Gilbert replied that a hearing of the property-owners had been called for Friday evening, October 10.

Councilman Moore inquired about the status of the Spruce Street widening. Mr. Gilbert replied that the property-owners had not yet reached any agreement among themselves.

Mr. Gilbert stated to the Council that the numerous matters now before the Board of Assessors were being acted upon as speedily as possible. For the past several months the Board had been very busy with its regular tax assessment sheet.

TOWN COUNCIL.

TAX DUPLICATE FOR CURRENT YEAR
APPROVED.

Progress Report on Essex Cross Railway Franchise Application—A New Culvert Proposed for Glenwood Avenue—Other Matters of Public Interest.

The Town Council met in regular session Monday night, and every member was present. Councilman Conlan, whose appearance was a surprise to his colleagues, was congratulated upon his recovery. The Council held a busy session, discussing road and sidewalk matters, and ratifying a number of the water contract.

The Board of Assessors presented the tax duplicate of the current year for the approval of the Council. Chairman Peterson declared a ten minutes' recess for inspection of the duplicate, and it was not long before Councilman Farrand and Mr. Gilbert were involved in a discussion over the assessment of a piece of Harrison Street property. Other members of the Council became interested in the question at issue, and the ten minutes' recess was indefinitely prolonged. The Council voted to approve the duplicate, with the exception of the disputed assessment in Harrison Street, which Councilman Conlan said could be included after the members of the Council had visited the property in question and judged for themselves of the equitableness of the assessment.

Councilman Conlan of the Finance Committee submitted the financial statement of Town Treasurer Harry L. Osborne for the month of September, which was read by the Clerk and ordered filed.

Councilman Unangst of the Fire Committee reported that repairs to the fire alarm system had been made at a cost of \$536, and professional electricians who had been requested to test the system had reported it in good condition.

The Town Clerk was directed to issue a notice to Morton Street property-owners that objections in writing to workmanship or material used in the construction of the sewer in that street would be received at the next meeting of the Council.

Councilman Conlan of the Road Committee reported the need of a new culvert across Glenwood Avenue near Second Street, and stated that Director McGowan of the Board of Freeholders was endeavoring to have the Board put a 40 inch pipe across the avenue.

Councilman Walker made inquiry from Assessor Gilbert as to the delay in the levying of the Belleville avenue storm sewer assessment.

Mr. Gilbert replied that some very important problems had arisen in connection with that work, and the commissioners had to proceed very carefully, as the action they were taking would have a bearing on all future work of the kind.

The monthly report of Chief of Police Collins showed eight arrests and \$29.50 in fines for the month of September.

Councilman Moore of the Franchise Committee made the usual progress report on the franchise application of the Essex Cross Railway.

The railway company was not represented at the meeting. Mr. Eppley may pounce down on the Council some night and tell the Councilmen some things like he told the Irvington Councilmen Tuesday night. He told the Irvington Council that the Essex Cross Railway Company felt that the town was asking too much for a municipality of its size, and they could not afford to construct a mile of road which would cost, when completed, in the neighborhood of sixty thousand dollars. The earnings would not warrant such an outlay, regardless of the 2½ per cent. tax imposed. "It looks to me," Mr. Eppley said, "as though the town wants to get a grip on us. If this franchise is so valuable, why you had better keep it for some gentleman who will pay your price, though you may have to keep it a long while before that man appears. If, however, the Town Council will modify the present ordinance according to the terms of the one submitted by me at one of your previous meetings, which passed its first reading, I will strongly advise the Board of Directors to accept it."

"A word or two just now in the way of an explanation to the public of our stand would not be out of place," put in Councilman Tuttle. "Trolley roads are no longer experiments; we know what they are, and to give a franchise to a quasi corporation for a term of years without any compensation is unfair to the public, who are the owners of the right of way. We can't ask for a cash compensation, and we have tried to incorporate in this ordinance provisions which would be the equivalent of a cash payment."

"Mr. Tuttle may be right in his argument," replied President Eppley, "but if this Council thinks that franchise is so valuable, why it can hold it. We are perfectly willing that it should do so; we'll build our road on private property, paying for our rights of way. Then we can build a road to suit ourselves and run our cars to suit our own convenience without asking the Town Council for anything."

The Water Company Explains.

At a meeting of the East Orange City Council a letter from the Orange Water Company explaining the increase in the water rate was read. It was as follows: Annexed is the answer the company will make to questions concerning the advance in water rates; viz:

The first of the year we were informed that it was the purpose of the city to take our plant when the contract expired July 1. Proceedings were commenced, when the sickness of Mr. William Clark made it necessary for his son Mr. J. W. Clark, one of the commissioners, to go to Europe, where he was detained for some time. In June the city requested the contract extended for three months, to October 1, to which the water company assented, stipulating that the city should pay the increased cost of coal, by going into the market at once, and buying the whole three months' supply. This increased cost was reduced to a comparatively small sum, but at present prices of coal the increase of cost will be very large. The hearing before the commissioners has not been finished. There is only a six inch connection with Newark, and if more were made, the gravity pressure would not supply above the first floor in many streets, and no fire pressure anywhere. Under these circumstances the company decided that the best course to take was to buy coal on the only terms they could obtain it, at present, so long as they could obtain coal, increasing all water bills, but making them for three months from October 1, instead of six months as heretofore. The advance in rates is 50 per cent.; six months at old rate was 7.50; three months at the new rate is 5.63.

SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT.

IMPORTANT ACTION TAKEN BY THE
TOWN COUNCIL.

May Not Wait for Property-Owners to Petition for Improvements—Council Can Lay Sidewalks When in Its Judgment Such Action Is Necessary—Property Owners Must Pay the Cost of the Work.

We have provided good roads for the horses and now we ought to devote attention to the needs of pedestrians, said Councilman Moore, Chairman of the Sidewalk Committee, at the Council meeting on Monday night, when sidewalks was a leading topic of discussion. Mr. Moore further said that he would like to see property-owners stirred up in the matter of sidewalks and display some zeal and energy in keeping the sidewalks in front of their property in good condition. In the crusade against weeds along the sidewalks undertaken by the Sidewalk Committee, Mr. Moore stated, many property-owners had put down and removed the weeds along the sidewalk, but in some instances a stubborn property-owner in the middle of the block would refuse to act, and thus destroy the uniform effect of the good work of his neighbors on each side of him.

Councilman Unangst cited the condition of the sidewalk on Glenwood Avenue along the Glenwood Park property as an instance of indifference of property-owners. Mr. Unangst wanted the Sidewalk Committee to put some ashes along that sidewalk, as it was used by all the children north of Second River attending the Prospect Street School.

Mr. Moore replied that the Sidewalk Committee had no funds with which to purchase ashes, as no appropriation had been for sidewalk purposes.

This led to a discussion of the power of the Council to compel an improvement of sidewalks. Attorney Halfpenny stated that under a supplement to the town act the Council could initiate proceedings for the improvement of sidewalks, and then pass the necessary ordinance.

Mr. Moore said that he had made some inquiry in Montclair about how the Montclair Council dealt with the sidewalk question, and found that the Council took the initiative whenever in its judgment a stone sidewalk was a necessity along any street, and did the work in accordance with law, and sent the bill to the property owner. The Montclair Council, Mr. Moore said, did not always wait for property-owners to petition for the improvement of sidewalks.

Councilman Conlan offered a motion that the Sidewalk Committee make an investigation of some of the needed sidewalk improvements, the Glenwood Avenue case in particular, and report to the Council whether or not it was necessary and advisable for the Council to take the initiative in securing an improvement of the sidewalks. This motion was adopted, and the Sidewalk Committee will act in accordance with it.

WATER CONTRACT

RENEWED FOR ANOTHER PERIOD OF
THREE MONTHS.

The Commissioners Appointed at the Request of the City of East Orange to Determine the Value of the Orange Water Company's Plant Have Not Yet Reported—No Increase in Water Rates in this Town and Glen Ridge.

Councilman Harrison, Chairman of the Water Committee, reported at the Town Council meeting on Monday night that the water contract between the town and the Orange Water Company had been renewed for another period of three months, from October 1 to December 31. The contract expired in July of the current year. At the time it expired the city of East Orange had started negotiations looking toward the purchase of the water company's plant, or as much of it as was necessary for the operation of a municipal plant in that city, and as the negotiations were in an indefinite stage, the water company extended the Bloomfield contract for a period of three months, which covered it to the end of the present month, and when the renewal expired the question at issue between the city of East Orange and the water company was still undecided; hence the renewal of the contract for another quarterly period.

Chairman Peterson reported to the Council an interview he had with Joseph L. Munn, the water company's counsel, and in which the question of water rates was discussed. Mr. Munn stated to Mr. Peterson the situation between the water company and the city of East Orange, and which compelled an increase in the water rates in that place. Mr. Munn informed Mr. Peterson that there would be no increase in rates in this town and Glen Ridge.

The increase in rates to consumers in East Orange has occasioned much excitement and indignation there, and will be an issue in the election next month. The renewal of the contract here without an increase in rates leads the Newark Evening News to indulge in some sarcasm as follows:

"The people of Bloomfield now realize what a benevolent corporation the Orange Water Company really is. In spite of the increased price of coal, the company has made a temporary contract with the municipality for a supply of water on the same terms and conditions as existed in the past. Of course, the people on whom this boon has been conferred cannot fail to appreciate the great concession that has been made to them, and will show their appreciation by praise of the company, and thankfulness that they will be permitted to enter into a permanent contract for water with the same party in January next."

The residents of East Orange, on the other hand, in making a most vigorous complaint against paying their water rates at a comparatively high price, expect present prices that's waste of East Orange that it is fair to not supply of the Bloom party, business it so d

Property-Owners Pleased.

Councilman Conlan, chairman of the Road Committee, has had the lightest iron pipe that was applied at the junction of Morris Avenue and Franklin Avenue, or on any other street with a twenty-inch pipe with each basin on each side of the street. The work was done by Contractor Callahan, and it is regarded as a commendable improvement at this point, and the Road Committee has been congratulated by the property-owners of both Morris Place and Franklin Avenue upon the good job that has been done. It is characteristic of the work of the present Road Committee that whatever work is undertaken in the way of drainage of streets is carried out with a view to both efficiency and permanency. It should be stated that the improvement made by the Road Committee was requested by Councilman Walker.

Registered Voters.

The registry lists posted by the Boards of Registrars and Assessors in the several election districts of this town show the results of the house canvass as follows: First Ward—First District, 436 votes; Second District, 371 votes; Total First Ward, 807 votes. Second Ward, 16 votes. Third Ward—First District, 379 votes; Second District, 527 votes; Total Third Ward, 906 votes; Total registry in the town, 1713 votes. The total will be increased on the final registration day, Tuesday, October 25th, where voters who were missed in the house-to-house canvass will appear in person and be registered.

Heavy Obligations Imposed.

The Elizabeth City Council on Wednesday night passed the Essex Cross Railway Company's franchise ordinance on second reading, but imposed such heavy financial obligations upon the company that it is not likely that the latter will accept the franchise. It provides that the company, which wants to use a culvert across Morris Avenue to connect its line with the city water works, shall have the right from year to year to cut at cost of a trench, and shall pay 3 per cent. on the first \$10,000 of the cost of the trench, and the next year shall pay 4 per cent. on the next \$10,000, and so on, until the total cost of the trench is \$150,000. The privilege of operating their plant besides all the other taxes, etc. This was voted down, Mr. Eppley, representing the company, after the \$10,000 per year exaction had been inserted in the ordinance, left the Council chamber in anger.

It is said that the company may use the tracks of Senator John Reid's road in entering from Bloomfield and Irvington, in which event they would find a terminus in Elizabeth without cost, except the State franchise tax and the local taxation for the use of the

CLERK'S OFFICE
TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD.

Telephone No. 40.

